

## **AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:**

Please amend the claims as shown in the following Listing of Claims.

### **Listing of Claims**

1. **(currently amended)** A rake comprising, in combination:  
a head;  
an elongate handle extending from the head;  
a plurality of parallel, spaced-apart, flexible tines extending from the head opposite the handle;  
a brace movable along the tines between first and second positions to change effective stiffness of the flexible tines;  
a locking device releasably securing the brace to the head in the first and second positions;  
wherein the brace moves relative to the handle as the brace moves between the first and second positions; and  
wherein spacing between the tines remains unchanged as the brace moves between the first and second positions.
2. **(original)** The rake according to claim 1, wherein each of the tines extend through separate openings formed in the brace.
3. **(original)** The rake according to claim 2, wherein each of the tines has a rearwardly extending rib such that the tines are generally T-shaped in cross-section.
4. **(original)** The rake according to claim 3, wherein each of the openings are generally T-shaped in cross-section.
5. **(original)** The rake according to claim 1, wherein the head and tines are unitarily molded of plastic.

6. **(original)** The rake according to claim 1, wherein the head is molded of plastic and the tines are formed of metal.

7. **(original)** The rake according to claim 1, wherein the locking device includes interlocking protrusions and grooves formed in the head and the brace.

8. **(original)** The rake according to claim 1, wherein the locking device is adapted to releasably secure the brace to the head at locations between the first and second positions.

9. **(original)** The rake according to claim 1, wherein the locking device comprises a knob and rotation of the knob locks and unlocks the locking device.

10. **(original)** The rake according to claim 1, wherein the tines are unremovable from the head.

11. **(original)** The rake according to claim 1, wherein the handle extends to the tines.

12. **(original)** The rake according to claim 11, wherein the head includes a socket at the tines and a support forming a passage extending through the support and spaced apart from the socket, and wherein the handle extends through the passage and into the socket.

13. **(cancelled)**

14. **(cancelled)**

15. **(currently amended)** The rake according to claim ~~14~~ 12, wherein the head, socket and support are unitarily molded of plastic.

16. **(currently amended)** The rake according to claim ~~14~~ 12, wherein the support is generally cylindrical shaped.

17. **(cancelled)**

18. **(cancelled)**

19. **(cancelled)**

20. **(currently amended)** A rake comprising, in combination:

a head;

an elongate handle extending from the head;

a plurality of parallel, spaced-apart, flexible tines extending from the head opposite the handle;

a brace movable along the tines between first and second positions to change effective stiffness of the flexible tines; and

a locking device releasably securing the brace to the head in the first and second positions and at locations between the first and second positions;

wherein the handle ~~extends to the tines~~ is secured to the head to prevent relative movement therebetween as the brace moves between the first and second positions; and

wherein spacing between the tines remains unchanged as the brace moves between the first and second positions.

21. **(new)** The rake according to claim 20, wherein the brace moves relative to the handle as the brace moves between the first and second positions.

22. **(new)** The rake according to claim 20, wherein the handle is directly secured to the head.

23. **(new)** The rake according to claim 1, the handle is secured to the head to prevent relative movement therebetween as the brace moves between the first and second positions.

24. **(new)** The rake according to claim 1, wherein the handle is directly secured to the head.